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CHAPTER 5

"THE THREE RELIGIONS"

(1) *Ancestor Worship*

THE Chinese, it has been said, practise three religions; Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. The Min Chia, who have absorbed so much of the Chinese culture, also worship deities and practise rites which can be classified as Buddhist, Taoist and Confucian (or Ancestor Worship). But if one concludes from this that it is true to say that the Min Chia, or the Chinese, have three "religions", in the sense in which the word is understood in the West it would be a profound misapprehension of the real character of their beliefs. The educated classes, who are aware of the separate origin of the three systems, do not believe in any of them; the less educated, who practise the rites of all three, are not conscious of any such distinctions. In the Min Chia language, Buddhist Boddhisatvas, Taoist deities, local gods not in the Taoist pantheon, and ancestral spirits, are all described by one word, *ser*. The distinction between supernatural beings called *ser* and the ghosts of deceased persons, called *gur*, is the only one which is present in the mind of the ordinary Min Chia.

It would indeed be better, if it were possible, to forget the nomenclature and classification of religious beliefs derived from European studies of Chinese culture, since these introduce a false systematisation where no system exists, and create distinctions where none are known to the people themselves. The terms themselves are ill-defined and of such vague import as to be almost meaningless. Buddhism, when used to describe the Indian religion in its earlier phases, is a

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more or less precise term, but as a classification of rites practised, and beliefs held by the Min Chia to-day it is of limited application. Taoism can mean so many quite different things that it may be as well to list the principal meanings and then indicate which is intended when this word is used. Taoism is firstly the name of the ancient system of quietist philosophy developed in the fourth and third centuries B.C. Secondly it came to be the name of the slightly later system of astrology and alchemy which crystallised around the tradition that the early Taoist philosophers had become "Immortals". In the eleventh century the Sung Emperor Chen Tsung, for reasons of policy, elaborated an official polytheistic cult with a hierarchy of divinities comparable to the earthly hierarchy of imperial officials. This he labelled Taoism also. At the present time, in most parts of China, any cult, religious rite, practice or belief, which cannot be classified as Buddhist or connected with Ancestral worship, is described as "Taoist". In this chapter the word will be confined to the sphere of the old official cult, instituted first by Sung Chen Tsung and maintained by all subsequent emperors up to the Republic.

Confucianism, another loose term, in fact covers three quite separate things; the ethical and political teaching of Confucius and his disciples, which explicitly excluded all religious questions; the cult of Heaven of which the Chinese Emperors were the sole priests; and Ancestor Worship. The only link between the three is that none could be classified as Buddhism or Taoism. Here Ancestor Worship, or the Cult of the Dead, is all that need be discussed and therefore the term Confucianism will not be used. The practice of the Min Chia as regards these systems of belief can be outlined briefly before entering into detail. The Min Chia worship a large number of Gods, some of whom are Buddhist Boddhisatvas, some Official Taoist divinities,

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(1) ANCESTOR WORSHIP

771 some local deities. They also practise Ancestor Worship, there being a real distinction between the manner and the places in which the gods are worshipped, and those in which the rites of Ancestor Worship are performed.

771 356 One further source of confusion, not unrelated to the notion of "three religions" must be discussed. It is the common experience of all travellers in China, both Yunnan and other provinces, to find temples in poor repair, or ill-kept, and the attitude of the people to this neglect is one of casual unconcern. More than this, the people themselves seem to the European to have no reverence for their gods or their shrines. Men will eat meat and drink rice wine in a Buddhist temple, although wine and meat are forbidden to the Buddhist; they will allow anyone to occupy the shrine itself for a night's lodging, and they laugh, spit on the floor, and behave in an irreverent manner anywhere in the temple precincts. The traveller, or the missionary, who thinks of his own behaviour in a church, is shocked at this conduct and comes to believe that these peoples lack all true spiritual understanding, and practise three religions because they are incapable of devotion to any creed. Chinese of the educated classes, who are in fact agnostics, and hostile to the old religion as a survival of pre-revolutionary China, tend to confirm this opinion. But it is none the less mistaken.

771 If temples are neglected, they are also repaired, even rebuilt, and by public subscription. Hard earned money is spent by farmers who can ill afford any luxury. Women and girls will make long journeys to a temple on the day of festival, and spend relatively considerable sums of money on incense to burn at the shrines. Immense numbers of people collect at the temple festivals, and if many come for pleasure or recreation, great numbers also come to worship. It is not compulsion which brings the crowds and draws their money, for the government is at best indifferent, at worst

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771 openly hostile to the old religious system. If people will take trouble and spend money on a religion disestablished and scorned by their rulers, it can only be because they believe in it.

The explanation of this paradox lies in a misunderstanding of the Chinese (and Min Chia) approach to a religious rite, and the nature of the idea of what is sacred to the European, and to the Chinese. To the West, whether Christian, Moslem or Hebrew, and one may add Hindu, the Church or other place of worship is itself sacred, the house of God, where men meet only to worship the deity in a communal rite. This idea is wholly absent from the Far East. To these peoples religion is essentially not a communal, but a personal, or at most a family affair. The most important rites take place, not in any public temple but in the privacy of the home. The temples of the gods are monuments of piety, 793 built to please, not to house, the deities. Thus the Buddhist 771 "priest" is wrongly described, for he is is not the father of a flock, nor a sacred person knowing more about the gods and how to serve them than a layman. He is at best a monk self-vowed to a life of abstention in order that he may be reborn nearer to Nirvana, and he is also a technician who can be called upon to perform wearisome rites for which the layman has neither time nor inclination. At a funeral, or in sickness, the Buddhist monks are called in to chant sutras, for a fee, just as the doctor is called in to prescribe.

771 There is no communal worship at a temple by the laity. 782 Men and women go to the festivals to burn incense and offer a cash at the shrines of the gods, individually, to acquire merit, avoid ill fortune, or in fulfilment of a vow given in time of sickness. At other times, if they visit a temple, they do not feel called upon to behave in any but the ordinary way.

771 As a practical working system the religion of the Min Chia

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therefore falls naturally into two divisions, the public worship of the gods, whether Buddhist or not, which is carried on at temples and shrines, and the private rites of Ancestor Worship, which are performed in the home or at the family tombs. A broad division between the part played by the two sexes follows the same line of cleavage. The majority of the worshippers at temple festivals are women and girls; men though present, either do not perform acts of worship, or are in a small minority in doing so. On the other hand the rites of Ancestor Worship are carried on by the male members of the family. Women are not excluded from these ceremonies, and play a part in them, but the important rôle is assigned to the men, and without their participation the rites could not be carried on.

It is not easy to determine whether, or to what extent this division represents a difference in belief rather than a mere traditional division of functions. Confucian teaching, the old style Chinese education, was undoubtedly hostile to, or rather, contemptuous of, the other cults, which it regarded as superstitious. This attitude is maintained by the modern education, and in consequence the educated and partly educated men tend to ignore the gods, or leave their worship to women. On the other hand all families make use of Buddhist monks and more or less Buddhist ceremonies for funerals, and on some other occasions. Old men of wealth are the best patrons of the temples and the most generous donors for restoration funds. Among the poorer classes the worship of the gods on occasions of specific need is in no way confined to women. It might be supposed that the overwhelming majority of women worshippers at the festival of Kuan Yin is due to the fact that this Boddhisatva is regarded as a feminine deity, patron of mothers, Kuan Yin the giver of sons. It is natural that here the women should outnumber the men. But the same majority of women worship-

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771 pers is evident at the festival of The Dragon King of the Lake, in no way a goddess, and at that of Tung Yueh the Taoist King of the Underworld.

It is certain that there is, especially among the educated class, a feeling that worship of the gods should be left to women, but this idea is not sufficiently precise to give rise to rigid rules or taboos. On the other hand the rites of Ancestor Worship need a man to be performed, and cannot be left to the inclination or piety of women. Only a male descendant can make the sacrifices to the ancestral spirits, and failing sons a man must adopt a nephew or a distant relative to perform these rites. The elaborate rituals which are described in ancient Chinese literature, and which are or were, perhaps practised in modern times by great families in other parts of China, form no part of Min Chia practice. Ancestor Worship can be divided into a simple daily rite, and a few more ceremonial occasions recurring on fixed dates in the year.

769 353 Every family has an ancestral altar, usually a long table, which may be set up in the principal reception room on the ground floor of the house, or, often, in the long bare upper room, which by poor families is also used as a store room. On the table stand three ancestral tablets, representing the heads of the family in the previous three generations, and these are flanked by vases of flowers, and a few ornaments, with an incense burner in front. Sometimes, rather incongrously, a statue of Kuan Yin also finds a place on this altar. On the wall behind the altar red paper strips bearing the characters for Heaven and Earth are pasted, these rather vague powers, once worshipped by the Emperors, being thus associated with the ancestral spirits. Before the morning and evening meals one of the male members of the household, usually the son of the house, comes to the altar, strikes a gong, and lights a stick of incense in the burner before the

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777 rainbow you must not indicate where it is with a gesture, but merely say "there is a fine rainbow in the east", or the in the south, as the case may be.

771 In spite, or perhaps, because of, the complexity of their religious system and the number of overlapping deities whom they worship, the Min Chia cannot be called a really religious people. In their culture religion plays a secondary part. Lacking any unified and defined system of beliefs their religion has never been the dominating and co-ordinating force which Islam has been to the Moslems, or as Christianity was to the Christian nations of the west. Very rarely, except in a ceremony, will one hear the names of the gods on the lips of a Min Chia. Religion has never given common expletives to the language, and is seldom a subject for conversation. It is characteristic of their attitude that difference in religion is not felt to be so significant as difference in descent. To the Min Chia a Moslem is not primarily a fellow-countryman with a peculiar religion, he is a member of another race. A man asked to distinguish between two muleteers, one of which was a Moslem and the other a Yunnanese, said, "this one is the Chinese, that is the Hui Tze". "*Han jen*," the word used for Chinese, means Chinese by race and speech, "*Hui Tze*" a Yunnanese slang term for a Moslem, is derived from the name Hui Hui, an old Chinese name for the Uigur tribe of Tartars, who were among the first Moslems to be known to the Chinese. Yet these Moslems, although of alien origin, have been settled in Yunnan for six centuries and are entirely Chinese in appearance, dress, and speech.

771 The same attitude exists towards the Christians. Even
797 well educated Min Chia and Yunnanese are unable to understand or believe that the Christian missionaries have come to the country merely to convert people to a new religion. Such an aim seems to them meaningless. The idea

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of an exclusive creed, the one true way distinct from all others which are false, is so unfamiliar to their mental habits as to be barely comprehensible. They are therefore convinced, against all denial, that the Protestant missionaries are the paid agents of the British Government, and that the Catholic missionaries play the same rôle on behalf of the French Government. These two powers are the only European nations familiar by name to most of the Yunnanese peasants, since their possessions in Burma and Indo-China march with the Yunnan frontier. The feeling that converts to the Christian faiths are in some way the servants of foreign powers and perhaps not really loyal to their own country accounts for a good part of the ill-will with which they are often regarded.

Both missions find the Min Chia refractory material. Nearly seventy years have elapsed since the Catholic and Protestant missions were established in Ta Li, but their respective converts cannot yet be counted in three figures. This may in part be due to the fact that both missions have hitherto concentrated on the city folk who can be reached by missionaries familiar with Chinese, and only in recent years endeavoured to find Min Chia speaking converts who can preach to the villagers in their native tongue.

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797 Armageddon, they are not concerned with building a Christian community or nation, for they deny that any community is truly Christian. Thus the long-term methods of the Catholics make no appeal to them, for their approach is to the individual soul. On the other hand they require their converts to abstain from tobacco smoking, and alcohol, and discourage them from attending stage plays and similar entertainments. They thus require a Christian to change his manner of life entirely, and give up many of the characteristic customs of his native culture.

Like the Catholics, the Protestants also do not easily accord baptism, and as the convert has to shoulder some financial responsibility for the maintenance of the Church, and suffers some social disabilities for his new belief, there is little temptation to join the Church for unworthy motives. No doubt for this reason the number of professing Protestants does not exceed seventy in Ta Li and the adjacent country, and many of these are old women. It is, of course, possible that when the missionaries of both religions are proficient Min Chia speakers they will make more converts among the outlying villages where Chinese is only partly understood. The fact that the language is not written, and thus cannot be used for instruction in the schools or for translations of the Scriptures, has discouraged the missionaries from learning it.

797 771 Ignoring, for the moment, theological explanations, it is of some interest for the ethnologist to consider why it is that the missions have produced so small an effect on the Min Chia and the Yunnanese Chinese, peoples who at first sight, from their attitude to their own religions, would seem to be ripe for conversion. The Min Chia, although traditionally attached to Ancestor Worship and the festivals of the gods, are very little interested in theology and abstract ideas. They are not disturbed by conflicting beliefs

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and do not seem to have that craving for certainty and authority in religion which marks the peoples of the West. Like the Chinese, who by their proverb "Three Ways to one Goal", deny the exclusive validity of any one creed, the Min Chia are quite prepared to add another god to the pantheon, but not willing to recognise any one god as supreme and unique.

The Chinese attitude to religion has always stressed the ethical rather than the theological side, it is always more important to them that men should act rightly rather than believe the Truth. Consequently their approach to the teaching of Christianity is not by faith but by ethical judgment. The Catholics would have people believe in the dogmas and doctrines of the Church, but to the Min Chia and Chinese this is less important than the code of behaviour which these doctrines authorise. Here they find little that is new to them. Christians are monogamous, but so, for economic reasons, are the vast majority of the Yunnanese of all races. The existing code of morality is high and strict, and they do not find in Christian ethical teaching any call to a radical change in morality which would necessitate the abandonment of Ancestor Worship.

The Protestants require them to give up smoking, wine drinking and seeing theatricals. These injunctions do not make a wide appeal to ordinary men. Opium smoking is indeed generally condemned by the Chinese moralists themselves, and the government is endeavouring to suppress it, but tobacco seems to most Chinese, as to many Europeans, a harmless indulgence. Nor is drunkenness a social evil among the Min Chia or Chinese. Wine is never drunk except at a party, and then very rarely to excess. The Chinese stage is probably the least licentious, not to say the most moral, of any in the world, and most plays are definitely based on an ethical idea such as loyalty, conjugal

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174 important among them, was Kou P'in-shan, called Isaac Whiteheart in Mr. Torrance's book, "The First Missionaries To China." Mr. Torrance became interested in the customs of the Ch'iang, and especially in their religion. He believed that he saw physical resemblances between the Ch'iang and the Hebrews, and also that there were close resemblances in their social and religious customs. Mr. Kou was also interested, and at Mr. Torrance's suggestion he travelled among the Ch'iang looking for parallels. Both Mr. Torrance and Mr. Kou became convinced that the Ch'iang were Hebrews. Mr. Kou wrote a short pamphlet in which he expressed some of his veiws, and Mr. Torrance later wrote his book, "The First Missionaries To China," in which he elaborately states his belief and his proofs. The research of Mr. Torrance and of Mr. Kou P'in-shan became subjective rather than objective, a seeking for facts to prove a theory, and Mr. Torrance's book is the finest example that the writer has ever seen of the results of subjective research in the interpretation of the life and customs of a somewhat primitive people. Facts have seemed to fit into theories when they really do not, resemblances have been exaggerated, and differences overlooked. The Ch'iang are a likeable people with some good characteristics and Mr. Torrance is to be commended for his sympathy and love for them, but that they are Hebrews is most unlikely, and the key to an understanding of their psychology, life, customs, and religion is a knowledge of the psychology of primitive people.

The following facts are worthy of note:—

[776] 1. The Ch'iang are not monotheists. In most localities they have at least seventeen gods that are considered to be Ch'iang, and it is certain that there is no place where there is not at least five. It is likely that the seventeen gods are known and worshipped all over the Ch'iang region. This does not include numerous Chinese gods that are worshipped almost everywhere.

[144] 2. There is not a single physical characteristic that would convince a physical anthropologist that they are Hebrews.

[771] 3. Their sacred ceremonies are not primarily for the forgiveness of sins, as is asserted in "The First Missionaries to China," although that is included.

[177] 4. The sacred cane shown opposite page 98 in "The First Missionaries To China," is a Mt. Omei pilgrim's walking-stick with the dragon head knocked off. Nowhere else in West China are such

III. 1. The arrow is fitted into the bow, the needles are in the case, we can sew silk well with them. 533

2. It is much better if I can meet my Chinese friend on the slope of the mountain, near the huts (this means: it is more convenient for the Tibetan girl to have a rendezvous with a Chinese than to work in her tent camp).

IV. 1. I shall now climb up the mountain; tell me whether there is a Fu-yeh (Living Buddha) there, and whether he will bless me (touch me with his hand).

2. I shall now climb down into the valley; is there peace there now so that I can do my trading?

3. I shall visit my friends in the village, will the villagers then think ill of me? Is my friend at home?

/41/ Religion

In the religious field conditions among the Tibetans are similar to those of the Chinese, that is to say, a more highly developed religious system was superimposed on an ancient primitive folk religion which nevertheless remained alive in the heart of the people. Just as the vulgar form of Taoism developed essentially from Chinese popular religion, so the Bon religion developed from Tibetan folk religion. Superimposed upon this in China is Confucianism and the specifically Chinese form of Buddhism, while in Tibet Lamaism represents the specifically Tibetan form of Buddhism. (1) However, 771 184

1. Compare in this connection Rockhill, page 730: "Primitive Lamaism may be defined as a priestly mixture of Shivaic mysticism, magic and Indo-Tibetan demonolatry overlaid by the thinnest veneer of Mahayana Buddhism." (Compare Wadell 7), page 17) - and Schröder 8), page 258: "The 'faith' of the Tujen combines into a common stratum which as Lamaistic folk religion covers the entire field of the Yellow church... Shamanism - Bon religion - cult of Heaven.... popular Lamaism."

the role of Buddhism in China cannot compare in importance with

771 that of Lamaism in the religious life of the Tibetans. The chief
124 reason why Lamaism has not supplanted Tibetan folk religion entirely is probably the fact that Lamaism is a very exclusive priestly religion, in the ritual of which the layman participates only very little, whereas folk religion, just as in China, corresponds most closely to the needs of the laymen, and is therefore the most indispensable to them. In Tibet, just as in China, a sort of border area has gradually arisen between Buddhist religion in its strictest sense and folk religion. In both countries Buddhism has taken over and more or less assimilated cults, rites and ideas from folk religion, and thus satisfied the religious needs of the people. The only difference has been that, in spite of its exclusiveness, Tibetan Lamaism is much more intimately interwoven with the religious, social and economic life of the entire people /42/ than is the case with Chinese Buddhism. The majority of the Chinese people are connected only very superficially with actual Buddhism, - most of them have very little or no contact with it at all. On the other hand, the religious life of present-day Tibetans is unthinkable without Lamaism.

771 We cannot, of course, attempt to give even a cursory descrip-
114 tion of Lamaistic religion in the following pages. Nor was it possible for me, during my brief stay with the Mewu-Fantzu, to gain a thorough knowledge of their folk religion. I must limit myself to a presentation of what my Chinese informer and interpreter, who was apparently interested, told me in answer to my questions about religion, what I learned from the Mewu-Fantzu themselves in conversations held through the interpreter, and my own observations and impressions. I shall try, however, to give the main characteristics of the religious life of the Tibetan layman - in this case the tent-dwelling, cattle-raising Mewu-Fantzu nomad.

186 Conversations with Tibetans which deal with their personal
771 conditions and especially with religious questions, are, of course,
124 difficult. The Tibetans are very suspicious of a stranger, being unaccustomed to the sight of foreigners, completely caught up in magic, and being unable to understand the interest of a stranger in their religious ideas and customs, which they themselves in most cases do not think about but simply accept. They are only too ready to fear that the stranger might cause harm with the knowledge he is seeking to gain. I was always obliged to wait for suitable occasions to bring the conversation around to religious problems as casually as possible. Often I had to change the subject,

Mewu

when I noticed that my questions seemed suspicious to the Fantzu, and take up the thread another time or with another person. In many respects I might have penetrated more deeply into a /43/ knowledge of the religious thinking of the nomads if I had questioned a lama, and perhaps I would have been better informed. But in that case I could not have avoided getting the viewpoint of the priest, and would not have learned what were the most important things in the religious life of the laymen.

Chinese and Tibetan folk religions are very closely related. In both cases religious thinking centers around a belief in spirits, nature demons and the souls of the dead. Therefore the most important religious acts consist in propitiating these spirits which are everywhere, and in warding off the misfortune they might cause. This belief in spirits and the rituals accompanying it are, in both folk religions, combined with a very primitive belief in magic and with many other superstitions.

The Mewu-Fantzu distinguish between actual evil spirits (Tibetan: djäxe-dan or djir-dan) and the spirits of the dead which correspond to the Chinese kuei (Tibetan: dzeo). The evil spirits cause sickness of man and beast, and sometimes loss of money or war, against which in the folk religion the sorcerer (böm-bu, see below) must intervene (he corresponds to the Chinese exorcist), or the lama in the religion of Lamaism.

The kuei can bring the same kind of misfortune. Above all are feared the spirits of those who were killed in war or who met with some other violent form of death. The Mewu-Fantzu also believe in the existence of headless spirits which are particularly feared. As among the Chinese, there are people who believe they can see ghosts.

If a kuei brings on an illness, the victim is possessed by the kuei, and the böm-bu must /44/ drive him out. If the sorcerer has driven him out but has been unable to destroy him, the kuei likes to station himself at crossroads. Hence people avoid them, especially at night, and prefer to make a detour. The souls of the dead which enter into the body of an animal, according to the Buddhistic belief in the transmigration of souls, are also feared, especially, as we have said, if they have died a violent death.

There is also a lively belief in nature demons, - mountain spirits, earth spirits and water spirits. Earth spirits are everywhere, and correspond to the t'u-ti-shen of the Chinese. The earth spirit is called "sa-tja"; like t'u-ti, he has a wife. He lives in the valley, usually along water. If one offends earth spirits, they can revenge

787 when the crime can be discovered and in what direction one must
792 travel to capture the criminal.

The strange blend of folk religion and Buddhism or Lamaism is
177 expressed very clearly, for example, in the ideas which the Mewu-
771 Fantzu have about life after death. On the one hand, they worship their ancestors, and apparently believe that the souls of these dwell in some form near the tent, since that is where offerings are regularly presented; and they also fear the evil spirits into which the souls of people having died a violent death are transformed. On the other hand, the Buddhist belief in transmigration of souls, whereby the soul can be reborn as a human being or animal, is commonly accepted. Thus our above description of the odd fear of the Mewu-Fantzu chieftain that the soul of his brother may have entered a groundhog, and his subsequent decree that groundhogs were not to be shot, was probably based on the confused blend of a belief in the transmigration of souls and in the danger of spirits of human beings who have died a violent death.

353 /60/ The cult at the family altar belongs primarily to Lamaistic
778 religion. In every tent the altar is on the right (male) side, at an
177 elevation of 1/2 meter above the ground, behind the hearth and next to the place where the fuel is piled up. It is a simple, rectangular wooden box that is 1/2 meter high, 40 centimeters deep and 1 1/2 meters long. In the middle of the altar there stands a small brass statue of Buddha, with three larger and three smaller bowls of water to the left, and four larger and four smaller ones to the right. These bowls are supposed to correspond to holes in the heart of Buddha. On the family altar of a bŏm-bu there are, as we have said, also prayer books, a large Chinese brush and a row of copper coins.

262 The numerous food taboos go back to Buddhist influence. The
177 Fantzu abstain altogether from eating the meat of horses, mules, donkeys and dogs, all fowl and fish, as well as eggs. At present the meat of groundhogs is also forbidden (1). They eat the meat

1. also pork, see above, page 25.

of sheep and yaks, but these animals are not killed in the ordinary way; they are strangled, and thus the crime of shedding blood is avoided.

782 Prayer runs through the entire daily life of the Fantzu. It is usually limited to the Lamaistic formula: "Omi mani padme hum." This they mumble especially while fingering their beads and if

782 two groups five or six times, and then they proceed to sing the follow-
533 ing two verses which again are repeated twice. Before they start to sing, each group must cheer loudly three times to call for rain, and the fourth cheer is the response that promises the coming of rain.

Conclusion

•771 In the preceding pages, we have made a preliminary survey of the
774 beliefs and practices of the Ch'iang people. Although our subject includes both, practices are actually the expression of beliefs in practical life. How the Ch'iang worship and believe in ghosts and gods, how they are afraid of the evil influences of the ghosts and gods, and how they rely upon the power of the sorcerers and the function of sorcery, all these can be seen from their practices. The religion of the culturally advanced races is often an imaginative and philosophical affair that attempts to answer the last question in life and the universe. The beliefs of the primitive people have nothing to do with it. They are only problems related to daily or practical life. (15) The sorcerer does

15. Briffault, Sex in Religion,

not study theology. He is only an expert in solving practical problems. Therefore, analyzing the practices of the people is the only way to understand the primitive beliefs.

In the first section, we have mentioned animism and fetishism, and regard the Ch'iang beliefs as remaining at the stage of animism and fetishism. /28/ The names of Ti and Ch'iang were known as early as during the Yin-Shang period. We may doubt that a people of such a long history could remain in such a primitive stage. However, cases like this are not very rare in ethnology. Haven't the Eskimoes of the Arctic region in America, the Australian aborigines, and even the most backward Bushmen of southern Africa had a long history? Here we see that the length of history and the progress, or the lack of progress, in culture are two different things. Moreover, the existence of the Ch'iang animism and fetishism is a fact which is recognized by all observers who do not wear colored glasses. However, animism and fetishism are special terms in science. How they coincide with the belief in ghosts and gods requires a brief explanation. E.B. Tylor of Great Britain says that animism is a belief in ghosts and gods. (16)

16. Tylor, E.B., Primitive Culture, 5th ed., Murray, London, 1913, Vol. I, p. 424.

771 This statement is right to the point. But the nature of ghosts and
774 gods is quite complicated. Deniker says that the so-called animism recognizes not only that a human being has a soul that can temporarily leave his body, but also that all animals, plants, minerals, and even artificial man-made products consist of two elements, the material and the spiritual. Things like dream, shadow, and imagination further strengthen the primitive people's belief in the existence of ghosts and gods. Furthermore they believe that ghosts and gods can be divided into the good and bad ones, and that sometimes they give blessing and other times trouble. (17) The variety and nature

17. Deniker, Les races et les peuples de la terre, p. 269, 272.

of the gods worshiped by the Ch'iang, as discussed above, coincides exactly with Deniker's statement. There is no doubt that the Ch'iang beliefs belong to animism.

Souls do not necessarily have shapes, but all objects have souls. Therefore, it appears that to worship the soul is to worship the object. And so Deniker regards fetishism as a kind of animism. S. Reinarch says, "The object inhabited by a spirit or soul is a fetish. In the early period of the Roman Empire, there was fetishism but no idol. The earliest God of War is represented by a spear and the God of Heaven a piece of flint." (18) In the same way the Ch'iang use

18. Oeuvres, pp. 143-4.

white stones to represent the various gods, a leather bag to represent the Poison King, and a fork to represent the Hunting God. The Ch'iang have no idolatry. Although there are now some temples with idols, yet this is the result of the Chinese influence. For instance, on the top of the Holy Mountain, "pai-k'ung-ke," at Hsing-shang-chai there were originally only three holy stones. But now there is a sculptured image of god behind the three holy stones. Some Chinese monks also live in the temple. Another example is that the Ch'iang at P'u-ch'i-shih-chai even give up their old tradition of redeeming vows in the Sacred Forest and instead they come to redeem vows at the Sinicized Chiu-lung Temple where there are images of gods like the Mountain King, the Cow King, the Ancestor of River, and the Mother of Earth, but no longer any white stone.

771 We have mentioned above that the tuan-kung is a Ch'iang
791 sorcerer. This is a Chinese term whereas in the Ch'iang language the tuan-kung is called pi. There is no question about the fact that

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the tuan-kung is a sorcerer. However, there are several kinds of sorcerers. The ancient Slavic people called those in charge of sacrifice to the deity priests and those practicing incantation and witchcraft magicians. (19) However, the tuan-kung of the Ch'iang possesses

19. Ibid. p. 260.

the double personality of priest and magician. He is the one who offers sacrifice to gods; he is also the one who exorcises devils and evil spirits. This kind of person has the same status as the Shaman who is prevalent among the peoples in the Frigid and the Sub-frigid Zones of eastern Asia. Montandon says that the Shaman is both priest and sorcerer. (20) Shirokogoroff says that in the language of the

20. Montandon, Traite d'éthnologie culturelle, p. 145.

Tungus, the word "Shaman" means the man or woman who can control ghosts and gods. He is the one who can utilize ghosts and gods to help himself and can, particularly, help those patients under the attack of devils. He has a way to communicate with devils and gods. (21)

21. Shirokogoroff, Psychomental complex of the Tungus, p. 269.

Such being the case, /29/ Shaman is not only a priest and magician, but he also possesses the qualification of a medicine man. However, since he is a magician, he is also automatically a medicine man because to cure diseases by magic is a general method among the primitive people. In ancient China, there was also the saying: "Sorcerer P'eng practises medicine." (22) Evidently, during the period of

22. Lü-shih-ch'un-ch'iu /Lü's Annals/.

sorcery, the medicine men must have also been sorcerers. This is probably an invariable principle. The Ch'iang practices only add another evidence to this principle. As to the observation that the Shaman possesses the double personality of priest and magician, the question is which personality, from the point of view of religious history, precedes the other? On this point Deniker says that as society progresses, magicians must also become priests. However, it often happens that after the priest class is born, the original sorcery remains.

(23) According to Deniker's theory, both the Ch'iang tuan-kung 771 791

23. Deniker, Les races et les peuples de la terre, pp.278-9.

and all the Shaman represent the last stage of sorcery and the first stage of priesthood.

In the aforesaid practices of the Ch'iang, we see that most of the magic rites performed by the Ch'iang tuan-kung is of the nature of imitative magic, which is based upon the mentality of the primitive people. Since the primitive people "regard similarity as reality." (24) Therefore they firmly believe in imitative magic and the

24. Ch. Blondel, La mentalite primitive, (Collection nouvelles culture).

effectiveness of incantation and gesture given by the magicians. All the practical activities of the primitive people often require the assistance of such magic as may be given to fishing, hunting and agriculture, to raising cattle, or to such human work as ship-building and house construction. (25) The Ch'iang rites of expelling

25. Thurnwald, Economics in Primitive Communities, p. 210.

bad luck are imitative magic extended to human work. They think, after such rites, the clumsy will become skillful and the poor rich. In the Ch'iang practice of praying for rain, the act of intercourse between the two sexes symbolizes clouds and rains in the sky, just like the agricultural festival in India which encourages promiscuity in the hope that the propagation behavior of human beings might influence the propagation of the grains in the field. The Bantus and the French Algerians in Africa, the Dayaks of northern British Bornea in Oceania, and the present Dutch and German farmers all have similar practices. The Ch'iang's killing white chickens and white dogs to pray for fine weather, their searching the mountains to pray for rain, the substitution of goats to die for men, as well as the tuan-kung's breaking a blade of grass to kill a person, all these practices also seek responsive influences through affinitive behaviors. They belong naturally to imitative magic.

The most important act in the Ch'iang rites of fecundity is the sprinkling of blood. The meaning of blood-spreading, according to the recent study by W. Schmidt, an Austrian anthropologist of the 771

•771 geo-historical school, is that: "Blood is the source of vitality. Therefore, during the magic rites of fecundity, blood is used as a symbol. From killing an animal to take out its heart to hunting human heads for sacrifice, all such practices are customs produced from this fundamental concept." (26) As to killing an animal by taking out its

26. W. Schmidt, Origin et l'évolution de la religion, p. 353.

heart, the white sheep, used by the Ch'iang in the capping ceremony at the sacrifice to the White Stone God on the roof top, receives exactly this king of heart operation. Besides, the yak used by the Ch'iang in the rites of redeeming vows before the White Stone God at the "pei-k'ung-ke" Holy Mountain must also have its heart taken out without being allowed to be killed by any other ordinary method. Although the Ch'iang nowadays do not have the custom of sacrificing human beings, still we can find it in history in the legends of Lin-chün concerning the barbarians in Pa-chün and Nan-chün. It is further evidenced by the facts that in ancient India human beings were used as sacrifice in spring and fall services and that the K'a-wa tribesmen on the Yunnan-Burma borders hunt human heads in order to protect farms, so it is beyond doubt that there is a relationship between bleeding and the rites of agricultural fecundity. Apart from this, the Poison Devil of the Ch'iang can transmit poison by eye, which is called "evil eye" in anthropology. This is an example of wish-magic. (27).

27. Kirkpatrick, Religion in Human Affairs, p. 131.

In the Ch'iang legends and practices, there are still many programs which contain special meanings. To explain them, it seems necessary to refer to the principles of totemism. Some Chinese scholars who have made studies of the Ch'iang tribesmen have mentioned that the Ch'iang have totemism. But they have merely pointed out the fact that the Ch'iang name their tribes after animals, without developing it further. /30/ There is indeed no way to develop it if we rely only upon the material available in history books. Based upon the material gathered from my investigation, I would like to interpret totemism as follows:

Generally speaking, a totemic people, whenever they come across an important occasion in life such as capping, wedding, or funeral, often hold a totemic identification rite or a rite imitating totem. (28)

•771 carrying of sheep.) The words 'ch'iang' and 'yang' (sheep) have a similar sound and are interchangeable."

called themselves "rmee". The best transliteration is, of course, the word 羊 (pronounced mi, meaning the bleating of sheep). To hang wool threads around the neck is to imitate the appearance of a sheep. This is a behavior produced by the principle of totemic identification. After they had defeated their enemies, these "shepherds," recalling their debt of gratitude to their totem, and wishing to identify themsleves more closely with it, went further to imitate the voice of the animal, calling themselves "rmee." This is probably the reason why the Ch'iang changed the name of their tribe. Strellow, an authority on the ethnology of Australian peoples, says that among the customs of the Australian tribes, there is, it can be said, not a single kind of rites which does not imitate the shape or the voice of some totemic animal. (31) With this as a related evidence, the theory that the

31. "Die Arunda und Loritja stämme in Central-Australian," 1908, quoted from Besson, Le totémisme.

"shepherds" called themselves "rmee" cannot be regarded as mere imagination.

The above-mentioned facts are derived from the Ch'iang legends. Nobody can deny the value of legends in anthropology. As for the Ch'iang and their totemic identification rites, there is, however, evidence of facts which can still be seen today and which are more dependable than legends. In the aforesaid Ch'iang practice of expelling bad luck and capping ceremony, there is the identification rite of circling the neck with wool threads. The act in the ceremony of expelling bad luck is very simple. But in the capping ceremony, there are additional programs which are to be noted. For instance, the act of the one to be capped kneeling before the image of the fir stick ancestor is similar to the embracing of the nurtunja (holy stick) in the adulthood ceremony of the Australian totemic tribes. This is also regarded in Australia as the hiding place of the ancestral soul. According to legends, every tent occupied by their ancestors erected a nurtunja on the top of which was a waninga (holy rod). Besides, there is a special program in the Ch'iang capping ceremony. In sacrificing to the Sheep God, the tuan-kung wraps wool threads around a living sheep that is not allowed to be killed. The wool threads represent gifts from ancestors. The fact that sheep and men are

equally qualified to receive such gifts shows obviously that sheep and men are equal and both totemic animals and men are descendants of totemic ancestors. A concept like this exists only in a totemistic society. 771

In funeral, the Ch'iang have the custom of autopsia. However, they do not directly cut and examine the corpse of the deceased but use a sheep as substitute. /31/ This practice can also be explained by the principle of totemism. In accordance with the principle of identification, men and sheep are equal. Therefore, what happens in the human body naturally will also show in the body of the sheep. So, in order to find out the cause of illness, we do not have to directly anatomize the human body and instead can discover it by examining the sheep's body. Moreover, the anatomized sheep serves as a guide to the deceased and is called the "Guiding Sheep." This also has totemic significance. The Omahas in America use the buffalo as a totem. After a man's death, his corpse is wrapped in buffalo skin, and an image of the buffalo is painted on the back of his head. Then the sorcerer prays: "Since you came from the animal world, please return to the animal world! Go straight ahead and do not come back!" (32) That the Ch'iang use sheep as guide probably contains also the

32. See Frazer, Totemism and Exogamy, I. p. 35, quoted by Vinogradoff, Historical Jurisprudence, Vol. I., p. 205.

meaning of "coming from the animal world and returning to the animal world." That the relatives are not allowed to eat the mutton of this sheep has also a totemic significance.

To interpret a part of the Ch'iang practice by totemistic principle, of course, can only be regarded as an experiment. We know that totemistic principles should not be applied lightly and loosely, especially after the criticism by Goldenweiser and Lowie, American scholars of the cultural school. However, the repeated facts in the Ch'iang culture compel us to make such an experiment, although we cannot thus assert that the Ch'iang have passed through a stage of totemism, nor can we recognize that the Ch'iang are now practising totemism, for a complete totemistic system will require various other conditions. (33) Therefore, we believe that even if the Ch'iang have totemism,

33. Goldenweiser, A. A., Totemism, an Analytical study, in the making of man, edited by Calverton.

•771 it must be only an immature totemism. This is a common phenomenon among the tribal peoples in northern Asia. For instance, the Tazes among the Yakut people believe that unless a woman has sexual relation with a bear, she will not be pregnant; the Kirghiz consider themselves descendants of dogs, and the Bouriate call swans their ancestors. Likewise, the organization of the Altai tribes resembles that of the totemistic tribes. All these can only be regarded as immature totemism. The Ch'iang are one of the northern Asiatic races. Their culture naturally mingles with and fits into this cultural sphere. Moreover, not only the totemism in the Ch'iang culture fits into the pattern of the same cultural area, but also things like Shaman religion, bone divination, funeral rites, farming and pasturing, etc., are all in uniformity with this cultural area.

In view of the aforesaid, it seems that there is a logical relationship in the system of the Ch'iang beliefs. Fetishism comes from animism, while Shaman religion and animism are inseparably related with each other. As to the question whether or not totemism is in harmony with these beliefs, our answer is affirmative. We can prove by facts that in the totemistic areas people have, at the same time, sorcery and the belief in ghosts and gods. For example, the totemic system in central Australia is associated with the belief in ghosts and gods. Australian aborigines believe that the problem of the totemic affiliation of their children must be decided by the place where the ancestral ghosts enter mothers' wombs or where women discover their pregnancy. (34) As to the prevalence of sorcery and sorcerous medi-

34. "Notes on some native tribes of Australia," in the Journal and Proceedings of Royal Society of New South Wales, XL, 1906, quoted by Vinogradoff, Historical Jurisprudence, pp. 205-6.

cine in Australia, it is universally recognized by all investigators. From the standpoint of academic theories, Schmidt believes that sorcery of passive nature originated in the primitive matriarchic society and sorcery of active nature is the product of totemistic culture. (35)

35. W. Schmidt, op. cit.

Furthermore, although some anthropologists regard totemism as religion, (36) yet the recent trend generally considers totemism as a social

36. For example, E. Durkheim (see his Elementary Forms of Religious Life,)

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system, not religion. (37) If totemism is not religion, then it can-

37. For instance, W. Schmidt, A. A. Goldenweiser, etc.

not be in conflict with animism and sorcery and its co-existence with the latter is possible.

2₁ Rock K-5 (1934-) 1947 AF16 Southwest China AF16
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S ch'uan, who had been settled there for more than 60 years. They, like the
114 Mo-so who dwell in this gorge, do not live, as he says, in "caves à demi en-
484 foncées dans le sol," but in houses built of stone. His map on plate 6 gives the trail as below the villages, while actually it passes above them and not along the river but at times 4,000 feet above it. The great Ta-shen-kou gorge, which the trail ascends and its eastern wall which it climbs in many zigzags, is not marked. According to him the trail leads only a short distance above the river. This is an impossibility. No one could walk along the Hu-t'iao-chiang or cross the Ta-shen-kou gorge without ascending it.

From Ta-ku, as well as from across the river, one can look up the tremendous gorge, and from the village of No-yü near the entrance one can look down it and obtain an idea of its grandeur, though not to the extent as if one actually travels through it. The quickest way to reach Bbĕr-ddĕr is by crossing the Yangtze at Ta-ku. Bacot gives us pictures of the inflated goatskin rafts by which he crossed, but not a single picture of the great gorge itself or of the renowned Hu-t'iao-chiang, nor of the villages in the gorge, as previously remarked.

As the northern part of the Chung-tien district is inhabited mainly by Tibetans no detailed description is here given, but the southern territory inhabited purely by Na-khi is dealt with in the following pages.

1. THE NA-KHI DISTRICTS OF HA-BA AND BBĔR-DDĔR (THE CHINESE HA-PA 哈巴 AND PEI-TI 北地)

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131 The districts of Ha-ba and Bbĕr-ddĕr are situated in the south-eastern part of the Chung-tien triangle and rest on the Yangtze loop in the east; on the Ha-ba ndshĕr nv-lv peak of the Yü-lung Shan in the south; the Ta-ra mountain in the west and Pei-ti Shan (A-nâ Ngyu Range) to the north. The massive limestone range of Gkŭ-dŭ also lies within the triangle.

S ST [184] The most primitive type of Na-khi, undisturbed since they first settled many centuries ago, dwell in this region. Here they follow their old religious
● 771 customs, which is a mixture of Shamanism and the pre-Buddhistic Bön religion
S ST of Tibet. There are neither lamas nor lama temples as in the Li-chiang district, nor are there any Chinese temples, for no Chinese live here.

[764] [755] An interesting feature is the total absence of graves in Bbĕr-ddĕr, for here the Na-khi still follow their ancient custom of cremating their dead. They take no medicines of any kind, but rely solely on their sorcerers to exorcize the demons of disease. They also practise in all its purity the ancient ceremony of *Muaṇ-bpō* (Propitiation of Heaven). The district contains one of the
S ST finest *muaṇ-bpō d'a*, or sites for the *Muaṇ-bpō* ceremony, situated in a beautiful grove of old oaks.

177 Their territory is most difficult of access and this has kept them isolated and
[519] unspoiled. They have not come in contact with the Chinese, but, unfortunately, they are exposed in the north to Tibetan bandit invasion, and several times their villages have been reduced to ashes and their cattle driven off.
S Being unarmed, they themselves fled into the hills to save their lives.

631 They are under the Chinese magistrate of Chung-tien, a town in a purely Tibetan district, but that official, when there happens to be one, usually flies

2: Rock K-5 (1934-) 1947 AF16 Southwest China AF16
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ST 795 of the Na-khi tribe. The ceremonies of the Zhĕr-khin tribe have already been described.

ST 162 The Zhĕr-khin tribe live in four villages in the Yung-ning district as follows: the village of Yu-mi with 13 families, Shu-dtü with seven families, Bpo-lo with 18 families, and Zo-wha with eight families; these live on the eastern bank of the Zho Chhu (Shu gyi) in Yung-ning. In Mu-li territory, Hsi-k'ang, also on the same bank of the Zho Chhu are the following Zhĕr-khin villages: Gya-pu, Dze-ngu and Dshe-pu. The Zhĕr-khin have Dto-mbas like the Li-chiang Na-khi. I suspect that the Shu-khin tribe from farther up the Zho Chhu is related to the Zhĕr-khin, although the Shu-khin language resembles more the dialect of the Gangkar-ling (Gangs-dkar-gling) or Garo Tibetans who are their neighbors. The Li-chiang Na-khi, the Nda-pa of Yung-ning, and the Zhĕr-khin received their religious teaching from Dto-mba Shi-lo whom they variously call Dto-mba Shi-lo, Dtü-mba Shi-lo, or To-mba She-ra. He is none other than the founder of the Bŏn sect, Tön-pa Shen-rab-mi-po (sTon-pa Shgen-rabs-mi-po).[2]

ST 711

S ST 346 718

The Yung-ning Lamasery. — The chief religion of Yung-ning as already remarked is Lamaism or Tibetan Buddhism, and is practised mainly on the Yung-ning plain. A fairly large and well preserved lama temple stands at its northern end facing Lion Mountain[1] (PLATES 224, 225, 226, 227). Back of the lamasery and in the same compound, is the official residence of the Abbot or K'an-pu 堪布 [from the Tibetan mKhan-po] and that of the General Superintendent of Yung-ning (Tsung-kuan 總管), a position held by the late A Yün-shan 阿蘊山.

The only other building of interest, besides the main temple, in the Yung-ning lamasery compound, is the Temple of the coming Buddha called Byams-pa (pronounced Jampa or Champa), the Maitreya or Loving One, the Messiah of the Buddhists. Nearly all larger lamaseries possess monster images of the coming Buddha, either made of gilt copper or gilded clay. Yung-ning possesses an image of the latter type. The coming Buddha is

[1] རྒྱལ་རབས་རི་བོད།

[2] The Yung-ning Lamasery is known in the Hli-khin language as Djra-mi-gko. A lama incarnation once came to Yung-ning and inquired as to the name of the place where the lamasery now stands. When he was told that the name of the place was Djra-mi-gko he exclaimed, "What a good place to build a lamasery," for he interpreted the name in Tibetan to mean "no fighting" (from dgra-mi-dgos = enemy unnecessary). A lamasery was then erected which is known to this day as Djra-mi-gko. Its Tibetan name is Thar-lam ga-den thup-ten de-kyi ling (Thar-lam dgah-ldan Thub-bstan bde-bskyid gling ཐར་ལམ་དགའ་ལྡན་ཐུབ་བསྟན་བདེ་སྐྱིད་གླིང་). The name Djra-mi-gko may be identical with the Na-khi Da-mă-gko, which means lamasery place — *Da-mă*, literally ground-mother; *gko*, inside; where all come together inside like flocking to a mother. Every large lamasery is called Da-mă-gko by the Na-khi. In the *Yün-nan T'ung-chih*, ch. 98, fol. 34a, it states that the Yung-ning Ssu is 308 li from the city of Yung-pei and three li north of Yung-ning fu (near the village of) Pi-ch'i-ts'un 必其村. The *I-t'ung-chih* gives its name also as Pi-ch'i Ssu 必其寺. Another name for the lamasery in Chinese is La-lo Fo-tien 阿羅佛殿 (Buddhist Temple of La-lo). La-lo is a village immediately north of the lamasery. The temple was burnt during the Mohammedan rebellion (1855–1873) and afterwards rebuilt, some 65 years ago. The exact date of the founding of the lamasery is not known, but it must have been during the period of K'ang-hsi.

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Si 342 the pig sty. The layout almost without exception was the same: first a larger main room, in the middle of which, between the central posts, was the fireplace; behind this room is a wall rack for the "Nat," and on this Chinese incense sticks; a small room, partitioned by a mat wall, Si [354] serves as a bedroom for the married couple. In it is usually a mud stove with a large iron kettle, in which the fodder for the pigs is cooked. Needless to say, the houses of this cut-off community, and the occupants themselves, make a very Si 113 wretched impression. According to tradition, Si they emigrated from China two hundred years ago. ●771 Their religion is the demon cult which they have in common with the mountain tribes. It must be assumed that they were influenced by the neighboring Shan and Palaung.

Y 101 [167] Some elements of the Yao tribes (Ting-pan-Yao) (19) have migrated from Chinese areas to the

19. UBG I, 1, pp. 601 ff.

eastern edge of Kengtung, the most easterly of the Southern Shan States—1911: 512. The bulk of this people can be found in eastern Yunnan and Y the adjacent provinces, also in Tonkin and Annam. [177] They are, of course—with the exception of their Y clothing—entirely Chinese in their customs and 342 architecture. Their houses are built at ground level, without pile substructure, and made of split bamboo. They contain one large main room Y and a few sleeping compartments with bamboo bed- [354] steads standing at the sides. The fire is lit in a mud stove. A Yao tribe, the Lenten, builds its houses on low piles. The Shan consider the Lenten as a group separate from the Tingpan-Yao. Though they have many things in common, there definitely exist differences which give weight to this supposition. They do not intermarry with other Yao tribes. According to UBG they belong to the Lahu group.